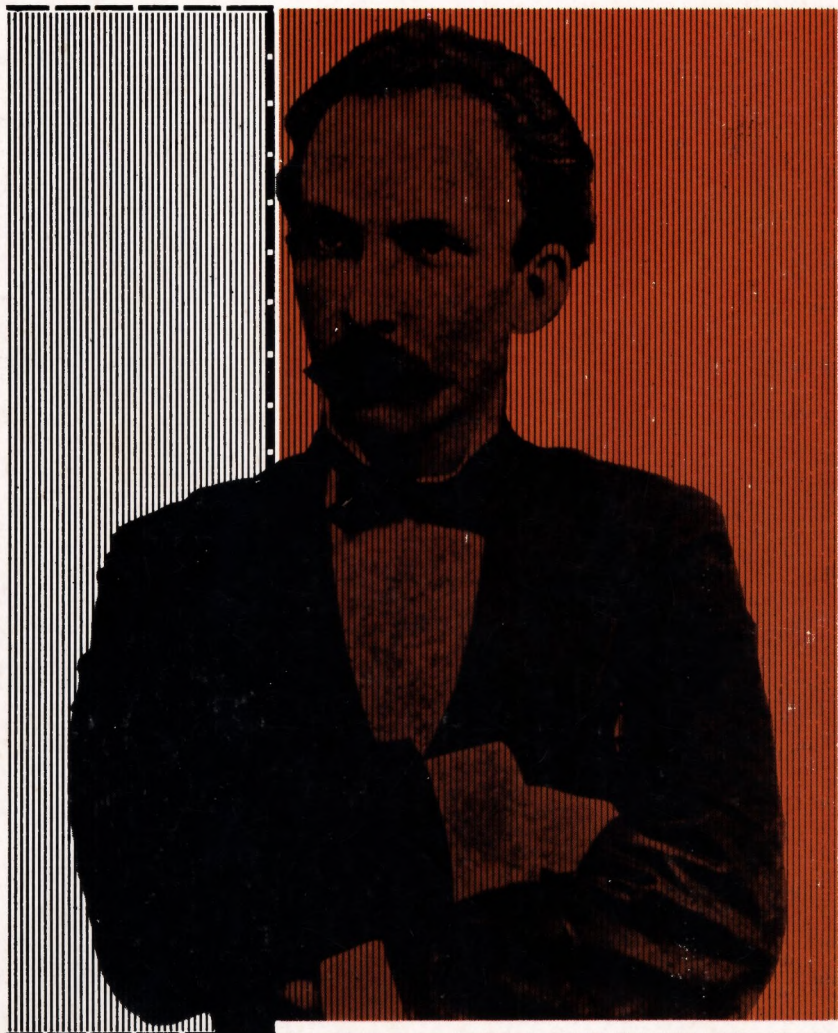


**jose
marti**

Havana 1986

REPLIES



JOSE MARTI
Publishing House

Materials referring to José Martí
and the Radio Martí Project.

jose martí

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EDITORIAL

Radio Martí

EDITORIAL JOSÉ MARTÍ

Publicaciones en Lenguas Extranjeras

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INTRODUCTION

The present US administration started broadcasting on May 20, 1985 through a radio station that offers twisted versions of events to Cuban audiences. This implies a violation of international laws in this regard, using the name of Cuban national hero José Martí (1853-1895) as a cover. This last aspect is an insult to the Cuban people which we cannot let pass. In addition, it implies utter ignorance of Martí's life and work. We therefore consider it necessary to present a small selection of the opinions Martí expressed concerning the negative aspects he saw in the United States during the last 15 years of his life (1880-1895), a period almost all of which he spent in that country.

Obviously, this modest anthology in no way exhausts the impressive panorama that Martí left us of the United States. Five of the 28 volumes of the most complete collection of his Works published to date (Havana, 1963-1973) contain his writings on that country, but they do not include all of his articles on the subject. Moreover, Martí not only discovered censurable aspects of the United States that were dangerous for Our America and the rest of the world but also found much to praise there, beginning with the US democratic traditions. Many of Martí's writings on such figures as Emerson, Wendell Phillips, Twain, Father McGlynn, Whitman, Lucy Parsons and the workers who were murdered in Chicago in 1887 are of lasting value, as are his articles on some institutions and other aspects of US life that merited his applause. Martí distinguished between two cultures in the United States: the aggressive, oppressive one, which he

attacked with growing violence, and the democratic people's culture, from which he learned quite a bit, enriching and radicalizing his own thinking in the process. It is, therefore, only fair to state that Martí distinguished between "the two faces of the United States."

Even before 1880, Martí was aware of negative aspects in the United States. His sojourn in Mexico in 1875 and 1876 put him in close contact with the Latin American country that, a few decades earlier, had lost half of its territory in an unjust war with its northern neighbor, and this placed him on the alert. In any case, it is understandable that Martí, as the enthusiastic liberal he was at that time, should exclaim on arriving in the United States in 1880, "At last I am in a country where everyone seems to be his own master." Nevertheless, by the following year, he already had serious reservations concerning the supposed goodness of the ruling system in that country, reservations that he showed in the first of the statements that appear in our brief selection.

However, we will never know how far Martí's harsh public criticisms might have gone, for several of the main Spanish-American dailies to which he contributed beginning in 1881 mutilated or refused to publish his work as soon as it brought out negative aspects of US society.

As a result, in the early 1880s, before Martí had reached his full maturity (in which he became a radical, anti-imperialist; revolutionary democrat, as may be seen in his articles against the first Pan-American Conference, held in Washington in 1889 and 1890), he was already a bitter critic of the evils he saw in the United States, even though censorship kept him from expressing himself on this point as he would have liked. This fact, among others, explains why, on May 18, 1895, on the eve of his death in combat, in his last letter to Manuel Mercado, in which he revealed the basic anti-imperialist task of his life, he wrote as follows to his Mexican brother: "All I have done so far and will do is for this purpose. It has had to be in silence, because some things have to be hidden in order to be accomplished. To proclaim them for what they are would raise insurmountable difficulties that would keep us from achieving our aim." Even under those conditions, he wrote so intelligently and acutely that,

as may be seen in the texts that follow, he managed, unmistakably, to criticize the negative aspects of a country whose positive aspects, related to its workers and creators, he esteemed. This clearly explains why it is ridiculous, to say the least, to give Martí's name to a radio station whose purpose is to promote everything that this great popular hero, who has justly been recognized as the guide of the Cuban Revolution, fought against to his dying breath.

JOSÉ MARTÍ REPLIES

A political aristocracy has been born of this financial aristocracy, and it controls the newspapers, wins elections and usually imposes its will in assemblies over that arrogant caste that ill dissimulates its impatience while awaiting the time it has enough supporters to place a strong hand on the sacred book of the homeland and reform the Magna Charta of generous liberties under whose protection those vulgar powers created the fortune which they now seek to employ in seriously wounding them in order to favor and increase the privileges of a single class.

“Letter from New York,”
La Opinión Nacional,
Caracas, November 26, 1881.

The monopoly is seated, like an implacable giant, at the door of all poor people. All undertakings are in the hands of invincible corporations formed by the association of idle capital, against whose influence and resistance an individual producer – with his useless energy and a few thousand dollars – doesn’t stand a chance. The monopoly is a black giant with a thunderbolt over its head. Thunder rolls in its ears, and volcanoes erupt under its feet. Tyranny cornered in the political sphere reappears in that of trade. This industrial country has an industrial tyrant. This problem, which I have only sketched in passing, may be one of the serious, dismal

ones that cannot be solved in peace, and it must be decided here, where it appears, perhaps before the end of this century.

"Martí's Letters,"
La Nación, Buenos Aires,
October 26, 1884.

The tumultuous foreign influx, the fantastic fortune awaiting it in the West and the magical energy and riches that sprang up and overflowed with the war gave rise in the United States to these new cohorts of birds of prey, a plague on the Republic, who attack and lay waste like the old ones. The good country regards them with rancor, but sometimes, enmeshed in their snares or dazzled by their projects, it trudges after them. Some Presidents, such as Grant, created as he was for troops and conquest, accept and maintain them and trade their support for acquisitions of foreign territory. These birds of prey form syndicates, offer dividends, buy eloquence and influence, surround Congress with invisible snares, hold legislation fast by the reins as if it were a newly broken horse and, colossal robbers all, hoard and divide their gains in secret. They are always the same: sordid, puffed up with pride, coarse, their shirt fronts covered with diamonds. Senators visit them by back doors; Cabinet members visit them in the quiet hour after the working day is over; millions of dollars pass through their hands. They are private bankers.

If the times are conducive to domestic intrigue alone, they contrive to assemble a clique of likeminded persons, influence government decrees to further their own purposes, quickly create a company, sell it while it inspires a public confidence that is maintained by artificial and filthy means and then let it drop. If the government has nothing but domestic contracts with which to feed their greed, they pounce upon these and pay munificent sums to those who help to corner them. They fall upon governments like vultures, assuming that their prey is dead, then flee to where

they cannot be seen, as vultures do through cloud banks, when they discover that the body they thought was dead is still alive. They have ready solutions for everything: newspapers, the telegraph, society matrons, florid and rotund persons of consequence and ardent polemicists defending their interests in Congress with their silver-tongued oratory. They have everything. They can buy anything. When they find something that is not for sale, they band together with all the other persons in like position and walk off with it.

They are a roving jail, with whom ladies dance, and respectable, important men flirt waiting in their anterooms and eating at their table. When this influential clique is discovered in one operation, it reappears in another. Its members have studied all the possibilities of foreign politics and all the combinations that can result from domestic politics — even the most problematic and unusual ones. Just as the moves are studied well in advance in a game of chess, so these men study events and their outcome and have the right move ready for all possible combinations. They are always motivated by an absorbing desire, an ever turning wheel in this tremendous machine: acquiring land, money, subsidies, Peruvian guano and the northern states of Mexico.

This is what the clique wants now, for it thinks that the suspension of subsidies to American railroads, lately decreed by Mexico as a worrisome measure, will provide a good opportunity for stirring up discontent and unloosing the Alexandrian appetites which, because the clique itself happens to have them, it assumes the North American nation has toward its Spanish-speaking neighbors. This is what the men in the clique are now proposing: the purchase of Mexico's northern frontier for a hundred million dollars. They have not yet found the method of government they had in Blaine's time; the White House is honest now. But they persist, keep striving and unscrupulously stir up the scorn with which the Latin people — and especially the Mexicans, since they are the nearest — are generally regarded here. And they falsely accuse Mexico of treason and of allying itself with the English. Not a day passes without their putting another log on the fires of resentment with satanic patience.

Those fiendish men who build their fortunes on the anxieties and hatreds of the people should be publicly dragged through the streets, barefoot and with shaved heads!

Bandits, not bankers!

"Martí's Letters,"

La Nación, Buenos Aires,

October 4, 1885.

The worker, who is an Atlas here, is growing tired of bearing the world on his shoulders and seems determined to shake it off and look for a way of advancing without so much toil [...]

The political parties, though alarmed, pay closer attention to their appetites and grudges than to this new element that threatens their existence. The press, that lives on created castes, is afraid of losing its clientele if it denounces the truth of the risk, and the Congress, composed in its majority of men brought up in favor of them, tends to use indirect, minor laws to win the willingness of that national mass that is growing, yet Congress' real, immediate laws serve the companies, banks, corporations and other powers which control its election and fortune.

"Martí's Letters,"

La Nación, Buenos Aires,

May 4, 1887.

Now we see close at hand what *La Nación* has seen for several years: the people's republic is being changed into a republic of classes; the privileged, powerful with their wealth, defy, exasperate, squeeze and expel from the free square of life those who come to it with nothing but their labor and intelligence; the rich are on one side and the poor on the other; the rich band together, and the poor do, too [...]

We see that the imposing institutions, refined systems, bewildering statistics, benevolent laws, vast schools and all

the rest of the outward paraphernalia cannot hold out against the push of a nation that passes with disdain by all of them, filled with a narrow, egotistical concept of life.

“Religion in the United States,”
La Nación, Buenos Aires,
May 17, 1888.

Haiti, Santo Domingo, Samoa and Bhering now, after the horror of the floods, take up more space in the newspapers than the prizefights, the Jerome Park races, college examinations and grades and the preparations for the English regatta; it is as if, by various means, the restless personage in Washington wanted to test his curious theory that all the land in America and all the seas that surround it are the natural domain of this North America, which the land and water of the hemisphere should obey as ever-lasting wards. Samoa wouldn't be of so much interest if the principle laid down in the conference could be forgotten in future cases involving the countries of the Americas and their environs in which European and Yankee interests clash.

The United States is ready to fight for supremacy in Samoa — Democrats and Republicans alike, since both crave international privileges that are out of proportion to the services rendered the country from which they are demanded and that deny the respect which a free people should have for the liberties of others, especially when it owes part of its influence and power to the admiration which the human race gives it (without sufficient examination) as a model, sanctuary and shield of political justice and the natural laws of man.

“From New York,”
La Nación, Buenos Aires,
August 2, 1889.

Once the United States is in Cuba, who will drive them out? Or why must Cuba remain in America, as according to

this precedent it would remain, not as the genuine and capable nation it is but as an artificial nationality created for strategic purposes? I want a more secure foundation for my people.

Letter to Gonzalo de Quesada,
October 29, 1889.

Our land [. . .], is threatened by another, more evil plan than the ones we have known thus far; it is the iniquitous one of forcing the Island – precipitating it – into war, so as to create a pretext for intervening and, as mediator and guarantor of peace, staying in it. There is nothing more cowardly in the annals of free peoples, nor any colder evil. Why should we die to benefit those who push us to our deaths? Our lives are worth more, and the Island must learn this in time. And there are Cubans – Cubans! – who, with hypocritical displays of patriotism, serve those interests!

Letter to Gonzalo de Quesada,
December 14, 1889.

Never in America, from its independence to the present, has there been a matter requiring more good judgement or more vigilance, or demanding a clearer and more thorough examination, than the invitation which the powerful United States (glutted with unsaleable merchandise and determined to extend its dominions in America) is sending to the less powerful America nations (bound by free and useful commerce to the European nations) for purposes of arranging an alliance against Europe and cutting off transactions with the rest of the world. Spanish America has already saved itself from the tyranny of Spain; now, after viewing with judicial eyes the antecedents, motives and ingredients of the invitation, it is essential to say, for it is true, that the time has come for Spanish America to declare its second independence.

In matters of such great interest, a false alarm would be as culpable as dissimulation. One should neither exaggerate nor distort what is seen, nor may one remain silent on the subject. Dangers must be recognized not only when they are upon us but when they can be avoided. In politics, the main

thing is to clarify and foresee. Only a virile and unanimous response, for which there is still time without risk, can free the Spanish-American nations from the anxiety and agitation – fatal in a country's hour of development – in which they will otherwise be held forever, with the possible connivance of the weak or venal republics, by the age-old, admittedly aggressive policy of a powerful and ambitious neighbor that has never desired to incite them or exerted control over them except to prevent their expansion, as in Panama; or to take possession of their territory, as in Mexico, Nicaragua, Santo Domingo, Haiti and Cuba; or to cut off their trade with the rest of the world, as in Colombia; or to oblige them to buy what it cannot sell, as it is now doing, and to form a confederacy for purposes of controlling them [...]

The North [USA] had been dreaming about these dominions from the cradle, with Jefferson's "nothing would be more appropriate"; with Adams' "The thirteen destined states"; with Clay's "prophetic vision"; with Webster's "great light of the North"; with Sumner's "The purpose is certain, and commerce contributory"; with Sewall's statement on everyone's lips, "The entire continent is yours, without limits"; with Everett's "continental unification"; with Douglas' "trade alliance"; with Ingalls' "from the Isthmus to the Pole, the inevitable result"; and with Blaine's "necessity to stamp out the causes of yellow fever in Cuba." And, when a thoroughly rapacious nation reared the hope and certainty of possessing a continent reaches this state of mind spurred on by its jealousy of Europe, by universal ambition, by a need for the false production it believes must be maintained (and even increased) in order to keep its influence and high standard of living – then it is urgent to put as many restraints on it as can be concocted with the circumspection of ideas, the rapid and skillful increase of opposing interests, the frank and prompt agreement of all who have similar reasons for fear and the declaration of the truth. Good will toward free nations endures until they betray freedom and endanger that of our own country.

"The Washington International Congress," *La Nación*, Buenos Aires, December 19, 1889.

Some of us have been brought here by misfortune; others, by legend; others, by commerce; and still others, by the determination to write, in a land that is not yet free, the final stanza of the poem of 1810. Others are ordered to live here by a pair of blue eyes, as their acceptable command. But, no matter how great this land is or how annointed the America of Lincoln may be for the free men of America – for us, in our very heart of hearts where nobody dares to challenge or take issue with our feelings, the America of Juárez is greater, because it has been more unhappy and because it is ours.

“Mother America,”
December 19, 1889.

Why go as allies, at the height of youth, into the battle the United States is about to launch upon the rest of the world?

“The Washington International Congress,” *La Nación*, Buenos Aires, December 20, 1889.

The scorn of our formidable neighbor who does not know us is Our America's greatest danger. And, since the day of the visit is near, it is imperative that our neighbor know us, and soon, so that it will not scorn us. Through ignorance it might even come to lay hands on us. Once it does know us, it will remove its hands out of respect. One must have faith in the best in men and distrust the worst. One must allow the best to be shown so that it is revealed and prevails over the worst. Nations should have one

pillory for all who stir up useless hatreds and another for those who fail to tell them the truth in time.

“Our America,”
La Revista Ilustrada de Nueva York,
January 10, 1891, and
El Partido Liberal,
Mexico, January 30, 1891.

He who knows and sees cannot honestly say – for this can be said only by the one who does not know or see or who, because of his own interests, is unwilling to know or see – that even in the United States of today there may be a prevalence of this most human and virile (although always egotistical and victorious) element of the rebellious colonists, who are sometimes the younger sons of the nobility and sometimes of the Puritan bourgeoisie. But this element – which consumed the native race, fomented and lived off the slavery of another race and reduced or robbed the neighboring countries – has been sharpened rather than softened by the continuous grafting of the European hordes, a tyrannical breeding of political and religious despotism whose only common quality is the appetite amassed by exercising over the rest the authority that was exercised over themselves. They believe in need, in the law of the jungle, as the only law: “This will be ours because we need it.” They believe in the invincible superiority of “the Anglo-Saxon race over the Latin.” They believe in the inferiority of the Negroes, whom they enslaved yesterday and are criticizing today, and of the Indians, whom they are exterminating. They believe that the Spanish-American peoples consist mainly of Indians and Negroes. As long as the United States knows no more about Spanish America and respects it no more – although, with the numerous incessant, urgent and wise explanations of our people and resources, it could come to respect us – how can that country invite Spanish America to an alliance that would be honest and useful to our

Spanish-American nations? Is political and economic union with the United States in the interests of Spanish America?

“The Monetary Congress of the
American Republics,”
La Revista Ilustrada de Nueva York,
May 1891.

The North has been grasping and unfair; it has thought more about assuring wealth to the few than about creating a nation for the benefit of all. It has transferred to new American land all the hatreds and problems of the ancient monarchies. Here a man is not calmed or balanced by a mysterious respect for the land of his birth or for the cruel legend of a country which in the arms of its heroes and the flames of its glory finally unites the factions that argue over it and murder it. In the hour of dread its own sons will come out of the North as if from a foreign land. In the North there is no protection and no roots. Problems are more serious in the North, and there is no charity or patriotism with which to solve them [...] Here the rich band together in one part of it and the desperate in another. The North is obdurate and full of hate. We should leave it behind.

“Crisis and the Cuban
Revolutionary Party,”
Patria, New York,
August 19, 1893.

In Our America it is vital to know the truth about the United States. We should not exaggerate its faults purposely, out of a desire to deny it all virtue, nor should these faults be concealed or proclaimed as virtues [...] It is supinely

ignorant and slightly infantile and blameworthy to refer to the United States and to the real or apparent conquests of one or more of its territories as we would of a homogeneous nation, with total freedom and definitive conquests. Such a United States is a fraud and a delusion [. . .] What honest men should observe is not only that it was impossible, in three centuries of life in common or one century of political awareness, to join in a single whole the elements of diverse tendencies and origins from which the United States was created but also that a forced rubbing of shoulders has exacerbated and accentuated their main differences and turned this unnatural federation into a harsh state of violent conquest. It is a quality of lesser people and of incompetent and gnawing envy, this pricking of holes in manifest greatness and flat denial of it for some defect or other — this going to great lengths of prediction, like someone brushing a speck of the sun — but it is a matter of fact rather than prophecy that, in the United States, the bases of unity are weakening, not growing stronger; the various localities are dividing and irritating national politics, not uniting with it; democracy is being corrupted and diminished, not strengthened and saved from the hatred and wretchedness of monarchies; and hatred and misery are being reborn and are posing a threat. Those who keep this to themselves instead of speaking out are not doing their duty. They are not doing their duty as men — that of knowing the truth and spreading it — or as good Americans who see the hemisphere's peace and glory secure only in the frank and free development of its various native entities. As sons of Our America they are not fulfilling their obligation to protect the peoples of Spanish blood against falling under the counsel of the smirking toga and the skittish interest, whether through ignorance or disillusionment or impatience, in the immoral and enervating servitude of a damaged and alien civilization. In Our America it is imperative to know the truth about the United States.

“ The Truth About the United States,” *Patria*, New York, March 23, 1894.

Cuba and Puerto Rico will obtain their freedom with structures and in times very different from those of the other Spanish-American nations and with far greater responsibilities than they [...] The Antilles will tip the balance for the Americas; if enslaved, they would be a pontoon bridge for an imperialist republic's war against the suspicious and superior world already preparing to deny it power, a fortress of an American Rome. If free — and deservedly so by order of an equitable and industrious liberty — they would be the guarantee of a hemispheric balance, of independence for a still threatened Spanish America and of honor for the great republic to the North. The United States will find more certain greatness in the development of its own land, unfortunately feudal and divided into two hostile parts, than in the ignoble conquest of its lesser neighbors and in the inhuman struggle — once it has them in its possession — that it will unleash against the global power for world domination [...] It is a world we are holding in balance, not just a couple of islands we are about to free. How petty everything is and how inconsequential village gossip, the pinpricks of women's vanity and the worthless intrigue of charging this work of hemispheric foresight with demagoguery and crowdflattering when contrasted to the true greatness of assuring, with the happiness of men working industriously for the independence of their nations, friendship among the opposing sections of a hemisphere and of avoiding, with the freedom of the prosperous Antilles, unnecessary conflicts between a tyrannizing American people and the world aligned against its greed! [...] A mistake in Cuba is a mistake in America, a mistake in present-day humanity. Whoever rebels with Cuba today rebels for all time [...] With this reverence the Cuban Revolutionary Party is entering its third year of life, firm and compassionate, convinced not only that the independence of Cuba and Puerto Rico is the one means of assuring both islands of the decent well-being that free men ought to have in their legitimate work but also that it is the one historic event that can save the threatened independence of a free America and the dignity of the American Republic.

Weaklings, show respect! Great men, march on! This is a task for the great.

“ The Third Year of the Cuban
Revolutionary Party:
The Spirit of the Revolution
and Cuba’s Duty to America,”
Patria, New York,
April 17, 1894.

The farther they draw away from the United States, the freer and more prosperous the American people will be.

“The Civil Wars in South America,”
Patria, New York,
September 22, 1894.

Tempered in the fires of present-day life, this is what the Cuban people are like. They recognize the power of their resources and are eager to use them. They speak the world’s living languages and think with facility in the principal ones. Thanks to their superior culture, they are second to none in the population center where there is the greatest opportunity for brilliance, and they have formed a firm, reasonable and enterprising character in their modest children [. . .]

This character structure of the sons of Cuba explains both their capacity for independence, which every honest nation that knows them will respect, and such a yearning for emancipation that it would be unjust to scorn or offend it.

Letter to *The New York Herald*,
May 2, 1895.

Dos Ríos
May 18, 1895

Mr. Manuel Mercado

My dearest brother: Now I can write and tell you how tenderly, gratefully and respectfully I love you and that home which I consider my pride and responsibility. Every day, I risk my life for my country and my duty — for I understand it and am determined to fulfill it — to win Cuba's independence in time to keep the United States from expanding through the Antilles and falling with that greater force on our American lands. All I have done so far and will do is for this purpose. It has had to be in silence, because some things have to be hidden in order to be accomplished. To proclaim them for what they are would raise insurmountable difficulties that would keep us from achieving our aim.

The lesser, public duties of the nations, such as yours and mine, that are most vitally concerned with preventing Cuba's annexation by the imperialists there and by the Spaniards — since it would open the way (that must be blocked and which we are blocking with our sacrifices) to the annexation of the nations of Our America to the brutal and turbulent North, which scorns them — have kept them from openly supporting this sacrifice, made for their immediate benefit.

I have lived in the monster, and I know its entrails; my sling is that of David.

Letter to Manuel Mercado,
May 18, 1895.

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA OF JOSE MARTÍ

José Martí was born in Havana on January 28, 1853, to a poor Spanish family. When the first part of Cuba's war for independence broke out on October 10, 1868, he supported it actively. He was imprisoned for political reasons in 1869 and, in early 1871, was exiled to Spain, where he studied Law, Philosophy and Letters. In 1875 and 1876, he lived in Mexico, where he began his lifelong career as a journalist and became familiar with many of the main topics he was to explore at length. He also lived for a time in Guatemala and Venezuela, but he spent most of his exile, between 1880 and 1895, in the United States. His experiences and his analyses of that country made him ever more radical, especially following the Haymarket Square events in Chicago in 1886. His evolution coincided with that of several US intellectuals, such as Mark Twain and William Dean Howells. The verses Martí published in 1891 are well known as the words to the song *La guantanamera*: "I want to cast my lot/With the poor or the earth." In 1892, he founded the Cuban Revolutionary Party, with the immediate purpose of fighting for Cuba's and Puerto Rico's independence and the longer-range one of preventing US expansion in the Antilles and then in the rest of what he called "Our America." The war for which he had worked broke out on February 24, 1895, and Martí returned to Cuba and died in combat in Dos Ríos on May 19 of that year.

Although he published only a few short political works and two brief books of verses, he produced a tremendous amount of writings, most of them in newspapers, some of which he edited — such as *La Edad de Oro* (1889), a magazine

for children, and *Patria*, a newspaper he founded in 1892 that was the semi-official spokesman of his Party. This work revealed him as the most important Latin-American political thinker and writer of his time. The newspapers to which he contributed in the United States included *The Hour* and *The Sun*. Charles Dana, editor of the latter, wrote the following and published it in his paper on May 23, 1895: "We learn with poignant sorrow of the death in battle of José Martí, the well known leader of Cuban revolucionists. We knew him long and well, and esteemed him profoundly. For a protracted period, beginning twenty odd years ago [*sic*], he was employed as a contributor of *The Sun*, writing of subjects and questions of the fine arts. In these things his learning was solid and extensive, and his ideas and conclusions were original and brilliant. He was a man of genius, of imagination, of hope, and of courage, one of those descendants of the Spanish race whose American birth and instincts seemed to have added to the revolutionary tincture which all modern Spaniards inherit. His heart was warm and affectionate, his opinions ardent and aspiring, and he died as such a man might wish to die, battling for liberty and democracy. Of such heroes there are not too many in the world, and his warlike grave testifies that, even in a positive and material age, there are spirits that can give all for their principles without thinking of any selfish return for themselves. Honor to the memory of José Martí, and peace to his manly and generous soul!"

US readers who can't read Martí in Spanish may consult a serious anthology of his works on the United States, *Inside the Monster: Writings on the United States and American Imperialism*, published by Monthly Review Press in New York in 1975 with an introduction and notes by Philip S. Foner. The same publishing house has brought out Martí's *Our America: Writings on Latin America and the Struggle for Cuban Independence* and *On Education: Articles on Education Theory and Pedagogy, and Writings for Children from THE AGE OF GOLD*.

JOSÉ MARTÍ IN THE CUBAN REVOLUTION

As the Cuban Revolution arrives in 1986 at its 28th. year, having soon gone through its democratic-popular stage to arrive at that of the socialist construction, it is still a motive of the greatest interest, especially among those who study our Revolution, the extraordinary actuality that José Martí has in his country to-day; his revolutionary thinking, as he himself pointed out in his memorable last letter to Mercado, "would not disappear."

Commander in Chief Fidel Castro called Martí the moving spirit behind the actions of July 26, 1953, and he would also be the spirit behind the whole revolutionary process they unleashed. This is shown by countless things: the courageous statements made during the trial of those who survived (especially in Fidel Castro's extraordinary defense, *History will Absolve Me*), Fidel's writing, such as his *Message to Suffering Cuba*, written in jail and distributed clandestinely in early 1954; and the two *Manifestoes of the 26th of July*. All these contain quotations from and reflect the basic thinking of Martí. Therefore, it is not at all surprising that, on the eve of the *Granma* expeditionaries' leaving Mexico for Cuba, Ernesto Che Guevara, a new member of the 26th of July Movement, wrote in his "Song to Fidel" that they were marching with their "foreheads full of Martí's insurrectional stars" and that the memory of Martí remained bright throughout the insurrectional struggle. When the Rebel Army crossed the island triumphantly in early January 1959, its Column 1, under Fidel's direct command, bore the name of José Martí.

This constancy to Martí's guidance was to be staunchly maintained and radicalized starting in 1959. Every important document of the Revolution proclaims this, beginning with Fidel's countless speeches. Che, who in 1960 called Martí "the direct mentor of our Revolution," headed his last great public text, his Message to Tricontinental (1967), with a quote from Martí. The First Declaration of Havana (1960) and the Second Declaration of Havana (1962) also begin by referring to him, and the Programmatic Platform of the Communist Party of Cuba (1975) clearly emphasizes "the fusion, in the Revolution's programmatic goals of José Martí's national revolutionary ideal and the Marxist-Leninist view which Fidel Castro and other leaders of the revolutionary movement had held since before the attack on the Moncada Garrison."

Our Revolution's inherently socialist nature (which it was too early for it to have in Martí's time) not only reflects his most beautiful and heartfelt aspirations but was also required to make them a reality and propose new tasks in national and international situations quite different from his, inspired by the men whom Fidel was to call "the greatest revolutionary political thinker of this hemisphere."

Undoubtedly, Martí's permanent presence in our Revolution's documents is decisive, for he embodied the revolutionary process itself. Although we cannot detail here all the paths that Martí opened for us to follow today, meeting new demands, we will outline some of them.

The first example which springs to mind is Fidel's calling our Revolution – when proclaiming it to be socialist – "a revolution of the poor, with the poor, by the poor and for the poor" it came to carry out the revolution which Martí announced to Carlos Baliño, to be won not in the fields but in the republic. The revolution that would make common cause with the oppressed "poor of the earth" mentioned in his fine poem "to consolidate the system opposed to the oppressors' interests and traditional rule," The "mountain [*sierra*] stream" mentioned by Martí in his prophetic verse turned out to be that great river that descended from the Sierra Maestra and came to be identified with all the people.

Just as the Communist Party of Cuba leads our Revolution, Martí's Cuban Revolutionary Party, one of his greatest gifts to history, was created to prepare for and guide the 1895 war of independence. Though based firmly on the workers, it united many social classes in its task of liberating the country. In view of the circumstances, it was so audacious that Fidel himself has described it as "the most honorable, legitimate predecessor of the glorious Party which today leads our Revolution: the Communist Party of Cuba."

There are countless examples of work undertaken or envisaged by Martí which has been continued or developed in our Revolution. Our first important law, the Agrarian Reform, fulfilled one of Martí's most cherished wishes. Since then "the poor of the earth" have no longer been poor, for this law put a definitive end to the evils of large landholding in Cuba and opened the path to the extinction of the exploitation of man by man.

Starting with the epic Literacy Campaign, our radical revolution in education has followed Martí's thoughts with admirable loyalty. Those young people who, armed with notebooks and kerosene lanterns, went into the mountains in 1961 were the "traveling teachers" whom Martí had sought.

After the Campaign, it was decided that work should be combined with study and this followed both Martí's and Marx's thinking. The new scientifically based Cuban school workshops for learning "how to control the forces that must be contended with in life" and for preparing to be useful - were founded on both Marx's and Martí's theories.

The same is true of our cultural policy, which "is rooted in José Martí's thoughts and is guided by Marxism-Leninism," as has been said by Armando Hart, Minister of Culture. The policy of holding fast to what is ours and rejecting all forms of colonial culture while consciously and critically opening the doors to universal culture bears out his words.

The extent of Martí's influence in our Revolution is best seen in its essential, fundamental respect for human beings: the successful struggle in Cuba to permanently eradicate all forms of discrimination based on race or sex and all other lack of respect for human dignity. When the first socialist Constitution in this Hemisphere was proclaimed, it ratified

our Revolution's positive, staunch fidelity to the Hero of Dos Ríos, the moving spirit behind the 26th of July: "We want the Constitution of the Republic to be guided by José Martí's heartfelt desire, finally satisfied, that 'I want the fundamental law of our republic to be the veneration of Cubans to the full dignity of man'."

Martí's respect for human beings is a fundamental concept adopted by our Revolution. The same goes for his vigorous anti-colonialist stand and his no less vigorous anti-imperialism which was ahead of his times. His opposition to colonialist plunder all over the world and his close identification with the pillaged peoples lead naturally to the firm stand that revolutionary Cuba has always taken on the subject - for example, in Non-Aligned meetings. Is it necessary to enlarge on the importance for our Revolution of Martí's anti-imperialism?

Even at the beginning of the last stage of capitalism, Martí denounced and fought it in the United States and warned our peoples of the imminent danger it implied. His pre-Leninist analysis of this fact, which is yet another irrefutable proof of his genius and of his radical position, would be borne out and developed in our times. His attitude is that of the Cuban Revolution.

Martí's anticolonialism and anti-imperialism were complemented by his certainty that our countries - forcefully kept apart - were fragments of a greater whole, called by him "Our America": the countries which Bolívar had sought to bring together in a single powerful unit. Martí brought Bolívar's plan up to date at the end of the 19th century, when US imperialism was beginning to be seen as the greatest threat to our countries. This awareness of the unity of the Latin American and Caribbean peoples was to gain new strength starting in 1959. To make true this necessary goal, Ernesto Che Guevara was killed in Bolivia more than 15 years ago, leading a handful of courageous men.

His pride in Our America never made Martí blindly nationalistic, however. On the contrary, he always remembered that our first duty was to all mankind, and he spoke for and practiced an essential internationalism, that has, through him, become our model of conduct. When our

Revolution sends unlimited, disinterested help to Angola, Ethiopia, Nicaragua and countless other countries, it is obeying a guiding principle of Martí's. Fidel Castro has said quite justly, "José Martí, guide and apostle of our war for independence against Spain, taught us this internationalist spirit which Marx, Engels and Lenin confirmed in the consciousness of our people. Martí believed that Homeland is mankind, and he outlined for us a Latin America united against the other arrogant, imperialist America - brutal and turbulent, as he put it, which despises us."

Thus Fidel Castro alluded to Martí's posthumous letter - mentioned at the beginning of this article - to his Mexican friend Manuel Mercado, in which, a few hours before dying in battle, he said that his main duty was "to win Cuba's independence in time to keep the United States from expanding through the Antilles and falling with that greater force on our American lands." He proposed to block "the annexation of the nations of Our America to the brutal and turbulent North, which scorns them" and showed that he knew, with his aspiration, that he was the representative of "the strong masses, the mestizo masses, deft and moving in the country - the intelligent creative masses of whites and blacks."

Such a knowledgeable and broad popular approach was considerably influenced by the nearly 15 years that José Martí spent in the United States. As he wrote to Mercado, "I have lived in the monster, and I know its entrails; my sling is that of David." There he met "the two perpetual programs, of the haves and of the have-nots," which was his way of differentiating between the rulers in the United States and the US masses - who are also victimized and with whom Martí expressed his solidarity. In an article written in New York, he warned: "The worker, who is an Atlas here, is growing tired of bearing the world on his shoulders and seems determined to shake it off and look for a way of advancing without so much toil."

Because of his teachings, José Martí belongs to all the peoples, to all the revolutionaries in the world, for whom he has been and will continue to be an admirable guide in their fights for liberation.

EDITORIAL

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